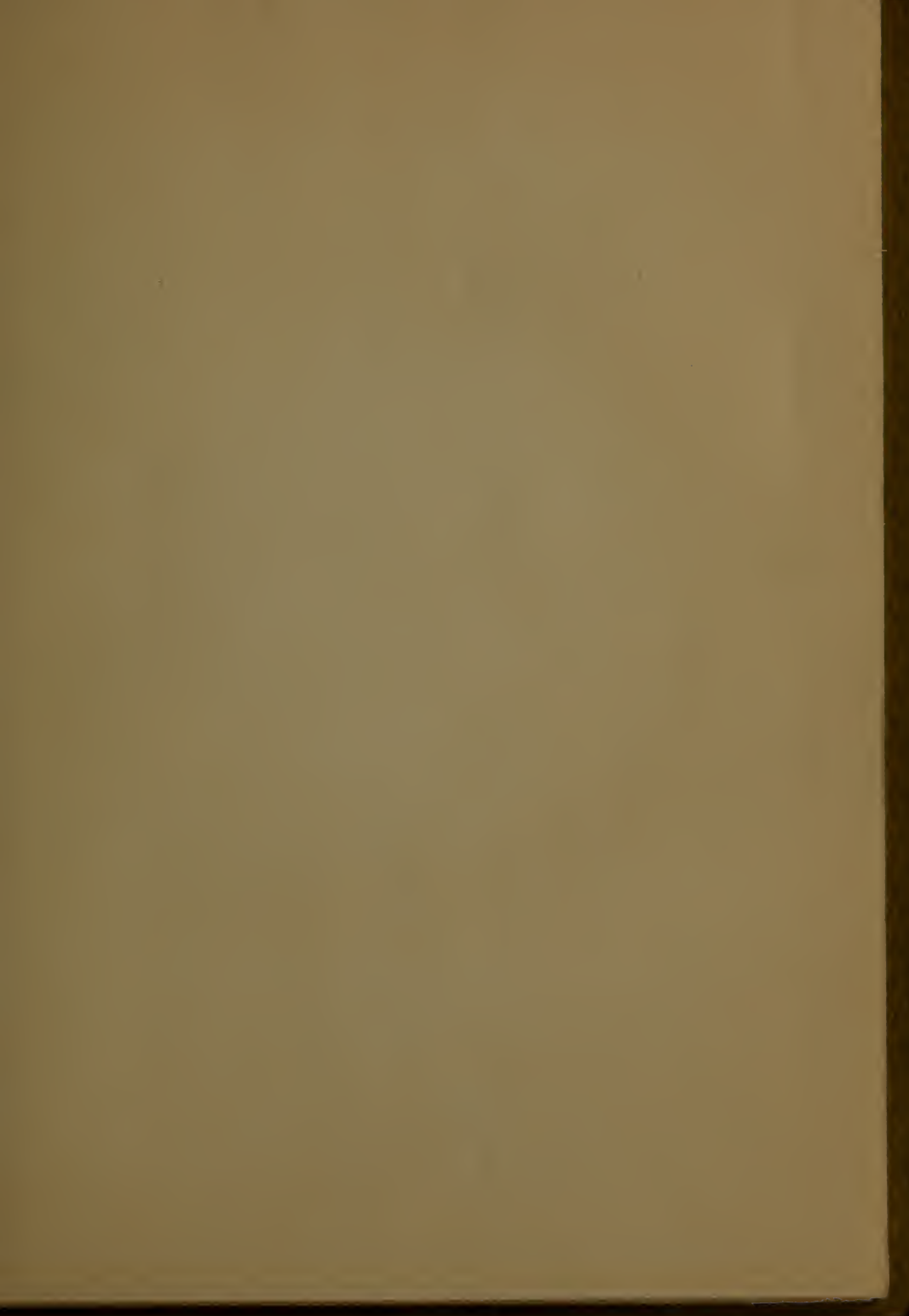


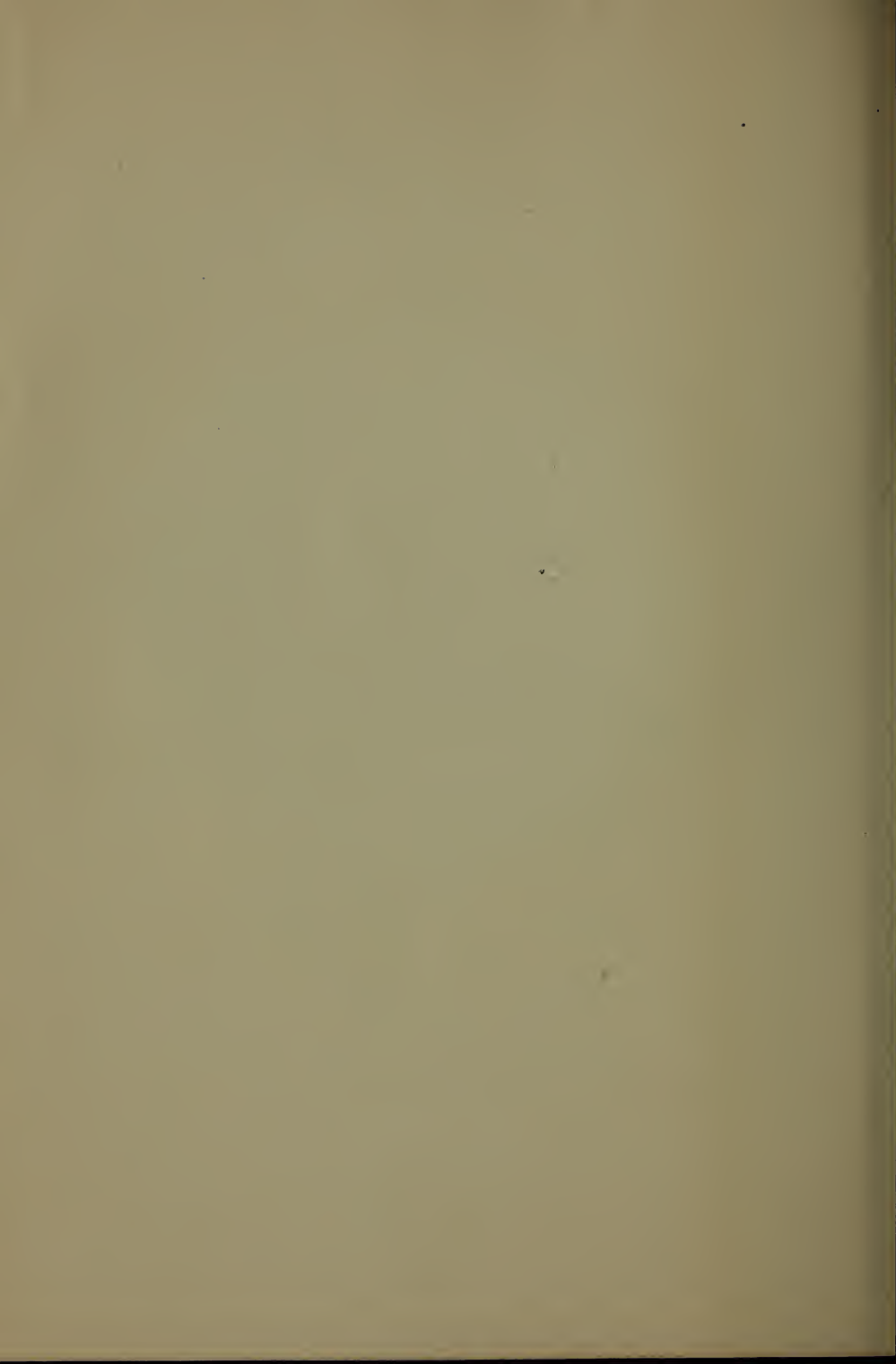
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YCH BERRIES



Mount Desert







**Bunch Berries
of
Mount Desert**

**By
Edith Colman Gurlie**

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1915



ESIDE the roses of poetry, we little bunch-berries have no place. But we do not pretend to be roses—We are only bunch-berries, sent to you in the hope that through our leaves, you may catch glimpses of the Happy Island whence we came. .



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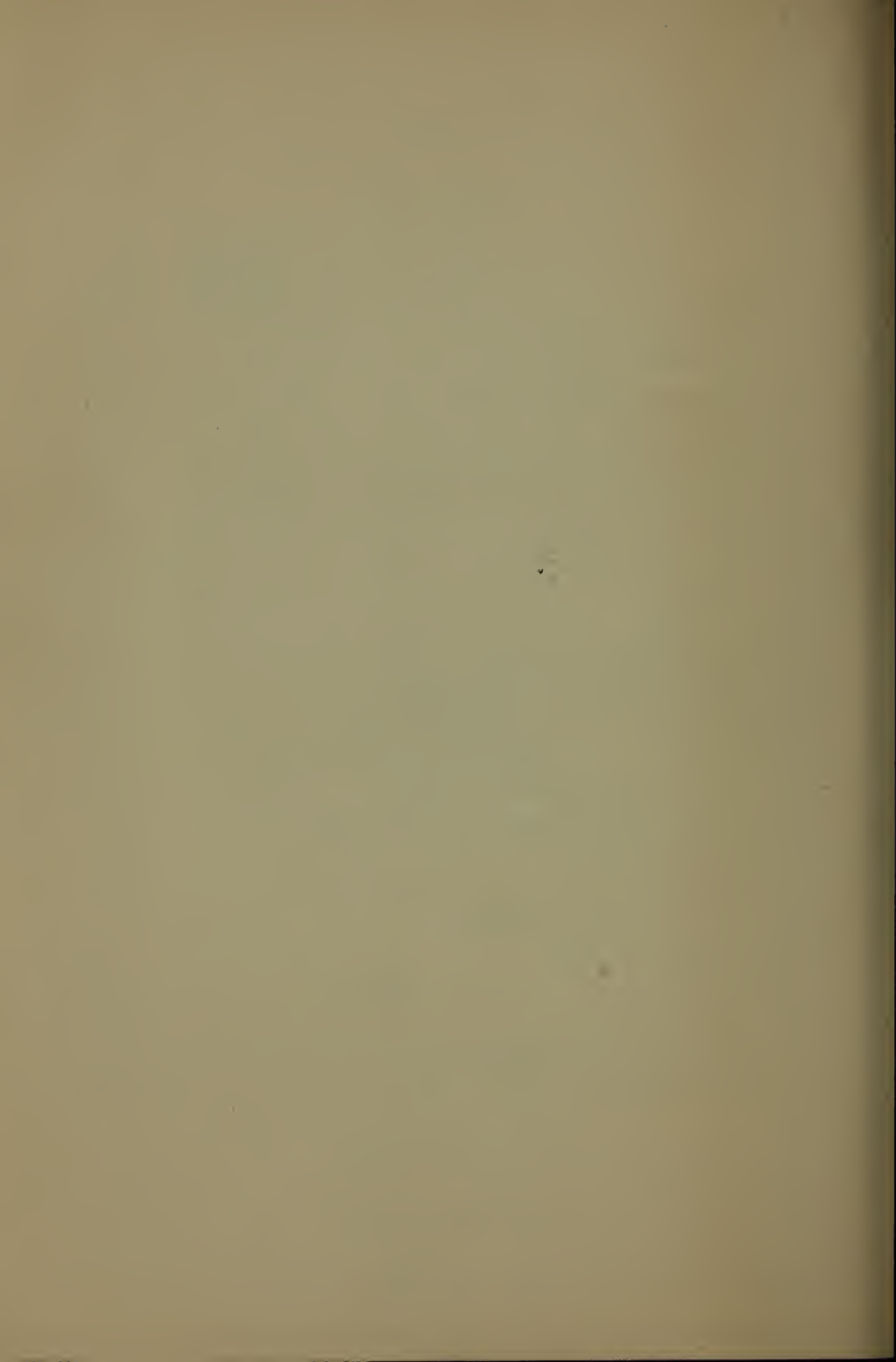
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THERE



HE day is nearly done; the sky,
That seems so very far and high,
Is looking now, more softly down
Upon the walled streets of the town
That holds me here.
Oh! why, through all the noisome day,
Should heaven seem so far away?
And there, so near?

Here, cramped for space and held from light,
I wait through day and long for night;
There, Sun sets in a world's expanse!
(And soon the Northern Lights will dance
In silent air.)
Blue sea and sky, one heaven seem—
Oh! let me close my eyes and dream
That I am there!

THE HAPPY ISLAND

Around the sunlit shore, the blue sea lies
Protectingly; and where the brooklets start,
Where mountains guard a little lake apart,
Across the inland blue, the sea-gull flies;
Or deep in forest depths, where tall pines rise
To sentinel their land, his white wings dart—
So lives the sea within the island's heart!
More radiant there, 'neath blue and silver skies,
Ethereal Summer shines. There, birches fling,
Nymph-like, from gleaming arms, the morning dew,
And clap their leafy hands to clasp young Spring,
And dance with her, the ways of Summer through.
And there, oh! there, my spirit-thoughts take wing,
To fly like homing gulls across the blue!

DAWN ON MOUNT DESERT

With shadow-sails unfurled,
Forth from the sleeping world,
Night, on the breath of Day,
Fares to the Far-away.

Over her starry wake,
Waves of the morning, break,
Spreading to sky and sea,
Bearing a mystery.

Dark on the pearly deep,
The boats in harbor, sleep,
Hung with dim lantern-light—
Forgotten stars of Night.

Like ships that at anchor, ride,
The islands part the tide.
Around them, quiet, slow,
A few gulls, wheeling go.

Now, shades of amethyst
Fade to a floating mist,
And robe in blues and grays,
The far hills' dreamy haze.

Softly the water grows
From pearl to palest rose;
The sky, to deeper reds;
Slowly the glory spreads.

Slowly the rose-lights pale;
Softly the mystic veil,
Wrought by the hand of Dawn,
From the face of Day is drawn.

Lo! now a golden rim
Curves from the world's far brim—
Steps from the morning sea,
The sun, in majesty!

To green, the islands turn!
(More faintly the lanterns burn;)
A fishing-boat sets sail—
Rent is the mystic veil!

Slowly the wonder fades;
The world, the natural shades
And forms of Day, puts on—
Oh! Vision! where hast gone?

Gone, as Youth's lost Ideal
Gives place to the concrete Real!
Yet fade to the Far-away,
Thou hast *been*, Dream-light of Day!



ON THE CLIFF

Oh! blue, blue sea that happy, lies
So close to Heaven! Oh! happy skies,
That rest forever on blue sea!
Oh! salt, wild wind that blows from far
Beyond that clear horizon-bar!
Had I but wings to fly with thee!
A sea-bird rose from off the cliff,
And dipped and soared within the blue,
But I must stand upon the edge—
I may not follow where he flew!
Yet farther than whence that far wind came—
Over the deep without a name—
Into the blue beyond all height—
My soul outstrips them in their flight!

THE SEA-GULL AND THE SONG

Why, Sea-gull, art forever crying
For that lost Song thou canst not sing?
When Beauty, Music's soul, is flying
Aloft upon thy waving wing?
What then, though on the wind art riding,
If far beyond thee, Song be gliding!

And Beauty's voice, through thee, is calling
The spirit-part of me, to rise
And soar, on wings that know no falling,
Through wider air to unknown skies—
Yet far beyond me too, is gleaming
A wingèd Song that haunts my dreaming.

And now anon, from sea art flying,
'Mong pines that fringe the shore along,
To float in silence through their sighing—
Dost think to find there, thy lost Song?
Or in deep caves, where waves are plashing,
Dost look to see its image flashing?

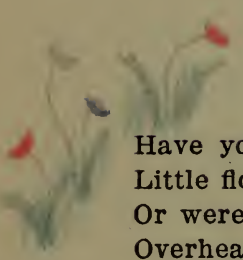
Wert thou a wayward wind, defying
The god, Æolus, who then wrought
To form of bird, thy soul undying,
But for the song of bird, found naught?
Yet turned thy flight to airy wheeling—
To fleeting sight, thine unseen feeling?

Or wert a dancing wave, too airy
To glide forever in the sea?
And caught in flight by some dumb fairy
Who had no voice to give to thee,
But curved, in silver spray out-flinging,
Those gleams of light on which art winging?

Now, with some vanished friend art playing?
Is't thy lost Song, the spirit-bird?
With whom in heavenly fields art straying
To music visible, not heard?
Or now with whom, on white wings, glancing
A-tilt on blue, art dancing, dancing?

Like Song, thy flying rhythm changes;
Like Music, mingling with the sea.
Oh! though thy cry so wild and strange is,
Give me thy wings! Sea-gull I'd be
In that blue world where dost belong—
Where motion's Music—flight is Song!

Yet still, like thee, with Beauty flying
Aloft upon my gliding wing,
I too, should be forever crying
For that lost Song I might not sing—
The spirit-bird, beyond us, gleaming,
Whose white wings hover through our dreaming.



THE WILD GARDEN

Have you caught the colors of the sun-rise,
Little flowers, a-tiptoe for the sky?
Or were summer sun-set cloudlets floating
Overhead, and could not pass you by?

"No!" the dancing little poppies answer,
"Never borrowed colors do we wear!
All these reds and whites and pinks and purples
Belong on us as well as anywhere!"

Any bee or butterfly knows *that* much!
Never takes the water of the Bay
For that pale-blue, foolish Love-in-a-mist there,
Even on a very foggy day!"

"Oh!" said the proper little heartsease,
As timidly up in my face, it smiled,
"They do not mean to be so rude, so oh! please
Excuse the poppies—they're a little wild."



ON A MOUNTAIN-TOP

"How wide my view of sea and land and town!
In silence 'round the reefs, the far sea flows.
The sea is all the world the sea-weed knows,
And pearls must slip between its bubbles brown.
And on the village-gardens, looking down,
Methinks the world, to sweet-peas, comes in rows,
Where winged, they wait, like fairies on their toes,
For what?—That upland, with its sunny crown
Of goldenrod and children at their play,
Is all that flower and child can know, while I
See so much more of this great world than they,
Who have so small a view of all but sky!"
—The blue sea calmly smiled from far away,
"Ah! little man! you'll learn more, bye and bye!"

A FRIEND

Down to the Sea, from Trouble I sped—
Trouble went with me as fast as I fled—
But the white waves called me to their feet;
The brown rocks made me a carven seat;
The kind fog shut the world away,
And cool its touch on my forehead lay.

And the sea-waves sang—What was their song?
I know not, though I sat there long—
Till into my lap, a little wave leapt!
I sprang up and laughed, and no longer wept.
I could not have told what that song might be,
But I was alone with my friend, the Sea!

BLUEBELLS ON THE SHORE

("Ting-ling!")
All the bluebells are a-swing!
—or did they ring?

The fairies! the fairies
Are raising bluebells on the shore!
"What for?" What for?
To use aboard their fairy fleet:
No fairy ship is e'er complete
Without a bell to ring the hours,
And so they grow the blue bell-flowers!
("Ting-ling!" the bluebells ring,
"Ting-ling!")

The fairy hour's one a minute—
(An hour's fairy fun is in it.
They keep a year of that in store.)
They use their bluebells up so fast,
They string them ready on the mast;
And when the fairy ship's bells ring,
The fairy bells along the shore,
Are all a-tremble answering.
("Ting-ling! Ting-ling! Ting-ling!")

Have you never seen their ships
In the foam-shine on the sea,
Racing there so merrily?
Seen their wee sails ride the tips
Of the waves that roll to shore—
Come to change their bells for more?
Never, 'neath the search-light moon,
Seen their little lights a-dance?
Have you never heard, by chance—
(Listen! and you'll hear it soon—)
When the fairy hour's rung,
Their ship's watch, in fairy tongue,
Calling, calling, day and night?
—But to hear them, there's a spell
You must say—"My-heart-is-light!"
Oh! hark and hear! for near and far,
On sea and shore, the fairies are!
"Eight blue bells! and all's well!"

("Ting-ling!" the bluebells ring,
"Ting-ling! Ting-ling! Ting-ling!")
—Or did they swing?

THE WOOD-ROAD

How still it is in here! the only sound,
The soft fall of my horse's feet on the soft ground.
My busy thoughts drop back, like rolling stones
Left far behind. In soothing undertones,
The pines are whispering to the low wind, "Hush—"
And to my restless thoughts, they murmur, "Hush—"

So, borne on whispering sound, my thoughts lie still,
The while the pines, protecting, lead me up the hill,
To where a pond with one white lily, shines.
I pull the lily—Now farewell, oh! pines!
Deep in the far wood, still ye whisper, "Hush—"
Long in my quiet thoughts, ye murmur, "Hush—"

SEA-LOVE

On wave-beat rocks, where wild sea-surges
roll

In majesty, Niagara's of foam—
Whose music is God's voice unto my soul,
Make I my home.

And when from sea to higher heaven I go,
And leave perforce, the sound of surges'
boom,

Beside the waves I loved while here below,
Build ye my tomb!

Then, while my spirit sails across the deep—
That space between the darkness and the sun—
Oh! Ruler of the waves! give me to sleep
Where sea and heaven are one!

WILD ROSE BY THE SEA

Wild Rose! Wild Rose! Thou Loveliness-in-Flower!
Thou Joy-Departing! poignant-sweet with pain!
How hast thou reached what mortals ne'er attain—
Perfection e'er the passing of an hour?
If speech were added to thy magic dower,
What mystery of Life couldst thou explain!
Thy frail, pink petals draw the Dawn again,
A silent moment gathered from Time's power,
A-tiptoe o'er the blue of sea and sky.
As softly from the sun, her wings may part,
Thy fallen petals in my hand, could lie,
And yet 'tis not thy thorns that pierce my heart
With thought that soon, such loveliness must die!
—Yet solemn, sweet and still as Dawn, thou art!

But e'en as Dawn's rose-light too soon must pale,
So thou must fade, oh! Wild Rose by the Sea!
The wind will strew thy petals o'er the lea;
Thy flower-soul fare forth upon the gale.
But if 'tis given thee to pierce the veil
That hides the vanished Dawn, oh! there, maybe,
Thou'lt join those children whom God tenderly
Lends us awhile—All loveliness too frail
For Earth, waits there—shy smiles at which we weep,
The things child-lips might tell, could they uncloze,
Now solemn, sweet and still in their last sleep—
Those secrets may be thine—and more, who knows?
Though still thy lips a lovely silence keep,
Art leaving us *that we may guess*, Wild Rose?

THE HILL WHERE THE SUN WENT DOWN

All day in the sky, the yellow sun
Has lit the world—Now his task is done,
And toward the hill in the brightening west,
He wends his way, awhile to rest.

Lo! as he nears that western hill,
Red, red roses his pathway fill!
And now, as over the crest, he goes,
Into the sea he flings a rose.

Over the crimsoned water, glide
The boats to the town in the black hillside;
And lights break out from the little town,
Like holes in the hill where the sun went down!

THE BELL-BUOY

 Ringing alone,
 Singing alone,
 There in the sea,
 What does it say?
 "This work's for *me*—

No light-house stands where *I* can swing!

 No flame burns long as *I* can ring
 To guide the ships their peril through.

 'Tis I alone, my task can do!
 And so I sing, by night and day,
 'This work's for *me*!

 Ringing *alone*,
 Singing *alone*,
 Here in the sea!' "

THE PINE-TREE'S LULLABY

Hush! little winds! for the birds are asleep,
Where they swing in my cradle slow;
And the tired little waves to the quiet shore, creep,
And lay them down like little—white—sheep,
With a sigh, on the sand, where no little winds blow
High or low, little winds!
Hush! little winds, by-low!

Hush! little winds, for the baby stars dream,
While their gentle moon-mother bends low.
She has laid them to sleep, by her lamp's yellow
gleam,
In their little cloud-beds, to float on a moon-beam,
To the far, fair land where *good* little winds go
By-low! Little winds,
Hush—little winds, by-low—



NORTHERN LIGHTS

The northern lights are curved above the world—
Laid close, as though some great bright angel's wing
Were spread to guard its sleep—as sheltering
As mother's arm to child in slumber curled.
And there, the great arch-angel might have furled
His shining plumage—here, have laid the ring
Of his bright shield, where dim, faint waters swing
So quietly within the Bay, impearled
With golden lights of little boats at rest
In shadows. Dark in line, the islands lie;
In darkness, but beneath the angel's breast,
The world's asleep. Lo! in the northern sky,
Move winged lights in changing radiance drest—
Faint shapes as though the angelic host were nigh!

GOOD-BYE

Good-bye! beloved island in the sea!
Good-bye! the time has come; now must I draw
My slow, reluctant steps away from thee.

Oh! when—Oh! when
Shall I see thee again?

Again behold
The morning's rosy gold
Re-gild thy shore?

As flower toward the light—as bird in air,
Oh! little world so beautiful! in thee,
My happy spirit found its wings, and there,
Thy birches through,
And sky so softly blue,
It lived in light—
And soared to heaven's height,
In ecstasy.

Thy sea that holds thee in her foam-white arms,
The wind along thy shore, thy gulls' wild cries,
Thy pine-trees dark against thy sun-set calms,
Each shell-pink cloud—
They call—they call aloud,
To bid me stay,
And yet I must away
From Paradise!

Good-bye! beloved island! In my heart,
As in the enfolding sea, thou'lt ever lie,
As deep as those blue depths where now thou art,
—A sunlit space—
Till once again, thy face
May smile on me.
My island in the sea,
Good-bye! Good-bye!

BUNCH-BERRIES: EPILOGUE

Deep in a wood, in dim depression wandering,
Slowly I sat me down upon a stone.
"What is the use," I said, "of idly pondering
On painting pictures for myself alone?"

Who'll care for these? in simple colors, blended
Of sunlight, sea, and drops of some heart's red,
And a few smiles—and tears, when all is ended!"
—Came a wee voice from out a leafy bed,

"Maybe a child, on little, light feet, straying,
Will come and find us, dotted here and there,
And at his laugh, child-angels, from their playing,
Come flying down, to find why Earth's so fair.

Or else a wanderer, such as this one—(only,
One who perceives more than that we're red!)
May gather some of us to send a lonely
Far-away friend, who, seeing us, instead

Feels the salt wind, straight from the far sea, blowing;
Sees his dear shore, whose birches beckon him
Into green aisles where bunch-berries are growing,
Brightening the shadow, where before, 'twas dim!

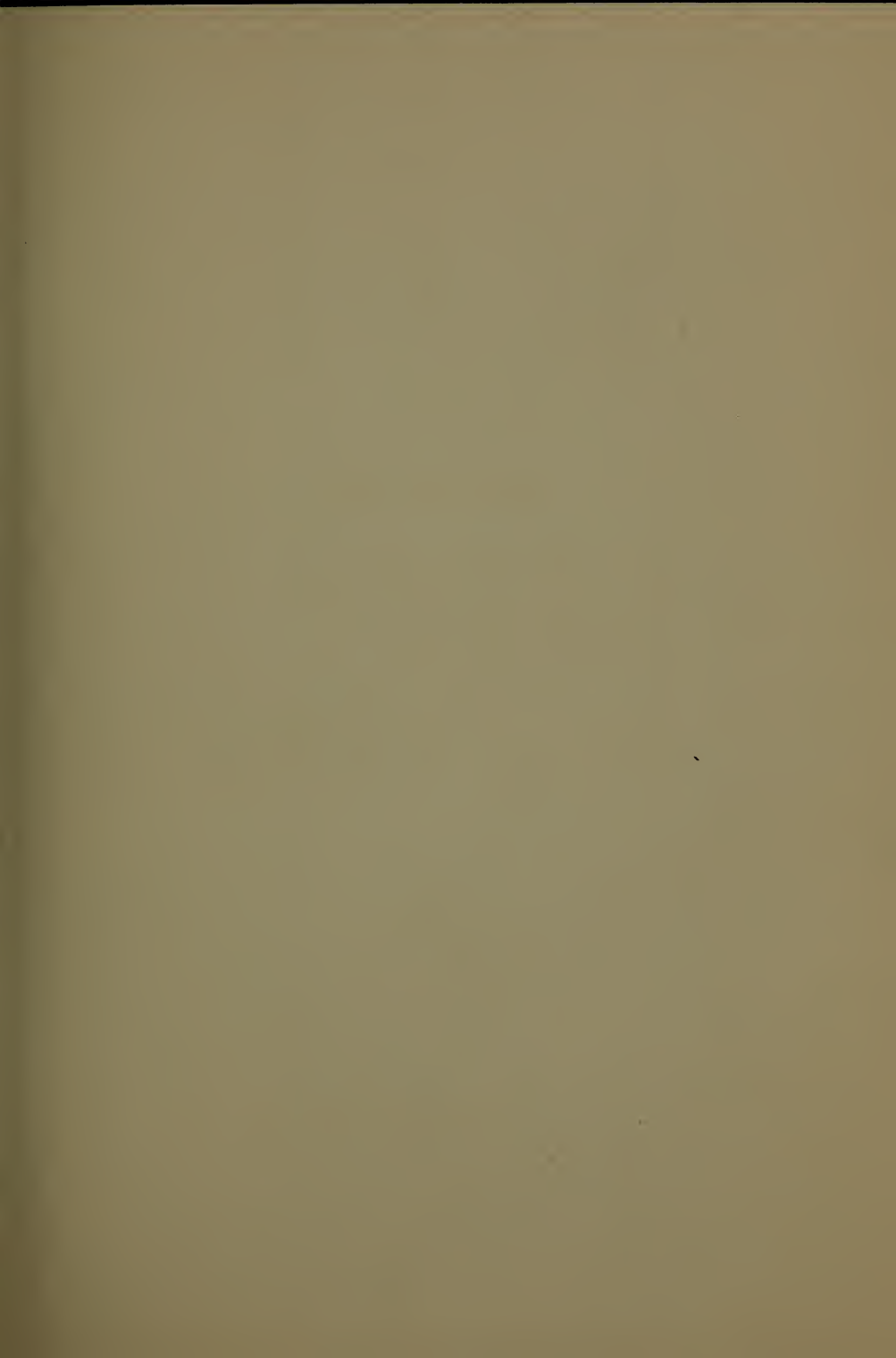
And if none come,—if here we bud and flower,
True to our colors, with nobody to see,
Through the clear air, 'Live your happy hour!'
God's voice calls,—and so we *have* to be!"

THE LAST DAY

Water slips away—away;
Waves are but a bubble- sieve;
Color needs the light, to live;
Sunshine cannot always stay;
Yet a Being comes to me,
Formed of sunlight and blue sea—
Whispers, "I am That Last Day,
That you *thought* had slipped away!"



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